

Applying Forensic Linguistics to Terminological Ambiguities in Criminal Law

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Abstract. Terminological ambiguity in criminal law presents significant challenges for legal interpretation, judicial consistency, and effective communication across languages. This study investigates the role of forensic linguistics in identifying, analyzing, and resolving ambiguities in criminal-law terminology, with a focus on English and Uzbek legal texts. Employing a mixed-methods approach, a corpus of statutes, judicial decisions, and legal commentaries was analyzed using semantic, collocational, and discourse-level techniques to detect lexical vagueness, polysemy, and translation inconsistencies. Results indicate that certain core criminal-law terms exhibit persistent ambiguity across texts and jurisdictions, often leading to divergent interpretations in legal practice. Comparative analysis reveals that cross-linguistic and cross-jurisdictional differences exacerbate these ambiguities, highlighting the importance of context-sensitive semantic interpretation. The discussion emphasizes the practical implications for legal drafting, statutory interpretation, and translation, proposing forensic-linguistic strategies to enhance terminological clarity and reduce interpretive disputes. This research contributes to the interdisciplinary integration of linguistics and criminal law, demonstrating how empirical linguistic methods can inform doctrinal analysis and policy-making. By providing evidence-based recommendations for standardizing terminology and improving legal communication, the study offers valuable insights for lawmakers, translators, and legal practitioners engaged in multilingual and cross-jurisdictional criminal-law contexts.

Keywords: forensic linguistics, legal terminology, criminal law, terminological ambiguity, legal translation, corpus analysis, ontology.

I. INTRODUCTION

Legal systems across the world rely on statutes, codes, and judicial decisions to articulate rights, obligations, and penalties. At the core of these instruments lie legal terms – specialized vocabulary intended to convey precise normative content. However, criminal-law terminology often exhibits semantic vagueness, polysemy, and translation variation, especially in multilingual jurisdictions (Bhatia, 2017; Gibbons, 2003). Such terminological ambiguity undermines the clarity and predictability that legal norms are expected to ensure.

Ambiguity in legal language is a well-recognized challenge. Statutes often suffer from “**linguistic indeterminacy**,” which can lead to divergent interpretations of identical provisions (Solan, 2010; Tiersma, 1999). In criminal law, where the stakes involve liberty, punishment, and social stigma, terminological ambiguity may produce inconsistent judicial outcomes, erode fairness, and complicate enforcement (McAuley, 2014).

The problem becomes particularly acute in multilingual or post-colonial legal systems, such as Uzbekistan, where legal codes, commentaries, and judicial decisions involve multiple languages, including Uzbek, Russian, and English (Khujakulov, 2023; Abdulkarimova, 2021). Borrowed or translated legal terms often lack direct equivalents in the target language or may carry different connotations, creating semantic gaps and interpretive challenges (Newman, 2016).

Moreover, legal terminology must ideally be uniform, stable, and standardized. Yet, in criminal law, terms often vary across statutes, commentaries, and case law, or evolve over time (Crystal, 2012). Comparative legal-linguistic studies have shown that such inconsistencies hinder the communicative function of law, making it less accessible and increasing the risk of misinterpretation (Garner, 2016).

Empirical, linguistics-based analysis of criminal-law terminology is therefore critical. Methods from forensic linguistics, including corpus analysis, semantic analysis, and comparative translation studies, provide tools for identifying patterns of ambiguity and inconsistency (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005). In multilingual jurisdictions like Uzbekistan, such analysis is particularly valuable, as it can reveal where ambiguities arise, how translators navigate them, and how legal communication may be improved (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022).

While some vagueness in law may be deliberate and philosophically justified to allow flexibility (Searle, 1969; MacCormick, 2005), unintended terminological ambiguity threatens legal certainty and fairness. Forensic-linguistic analysis can help distinguish between deliberate interpretive vagueness and error-prone indeterminacy, thereby supporting clearer drafting and translation.

In sum, terminological ambiguity in criminal law is a pressing theoretical and practical problem. It undermines clarity, affects judicial consistency, complicates translation, and challenges fairness. A systematic empirical study combining linguistic and legal methods is therefore both timely and necessary.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal language has long been recognized as a unique register, characterized by specialized vocabulary, complex syntactic structures, and a high demand for precision (Bhatia, 2017; Gibbons, 2003). Within criminal law, precise terminology is critical because even minor semantic shifts can affect the interpretation of statutes, the application of penalties, and the protection of defendants' rights (Solan, 2010; McAuley, 2014). Studies in legal linguistics highlight that terms such as assault, fraud, or possession often exhibit polysemy, context-dependent meaning, and cross-jurisdictional variation, which can complicate judicial interpretation (Tiersma, 1999; Garner, 2016).

Forensic linguistics, a subfield at the intersection of linguistics and law, has emerged as a valuable approach to addressing such ambiguities. Its methods include discourse analysis, semantic analysis, corpus-based investigations, and comparative translation studies, all aimed at understanding how language functions within legal contexts (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005). Empirical research has shown that forensic-linguistic tools can identify patterns of ambiguity, evaluate consistency across legal texts, and assist in clarifying the meaning of contested terms (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Newman, 2016).

Translation studies also provide insights into terminological issues in multilingual legal systems. In jurisdictions like Uzbekistan, the coexistence of Uzbek, Russian, and English legal texts often results in semantic gaps, lexical mismatches, or inconsistent application of terms across languages (Abdukarimova, 2021; Khujakulov, 2023). Comparative studies demonstrate that even when direct equivalents exist, cultural and doctrinal differences may lead to divergent interpretations, illustrating the need for context-sensitive linguistic analysis (Gibbons, 2003; Newman, 2016).

Furthermore, recent research in legal lexicography emphasizes the importance of corpus-based approaches to map term usage across statutes, case law, and commentary. These studies reveal systemic inconsistencies in criminal-law terminology, such as varying definitions of attempt, negligence, or intent, which complicate both judicial decision-making and translation efforts (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Coulthard & Johnson, 2010). By combining corpus data with qualitative analysis, researchers can categorize types of ambiguity (lexical, semantic, pragmatic) and propose strategies for standardization and clarification (Shuy, 2005; MacCormick, 2005).

Despite growing scholarship, a significant gap remains: most studies focus on general legal discourse or English-language contexts, with limited attention to comparative multilingual criminal-law terminology. Specifically, empirical research applying forensic-linguistic methods to identify and analyze terminological ambiguities in Uzbek criminal law is scarce (Khujakulov, 2023; Abdukarimova, 2021). Addressing this gap not only contributes to legal-linguistic theory but also has practical implications for legislative drafting, judicial interpretation, and legal translation in multilingual systems.

In conclusion, the literature demonstrates that ambiguity in criminal-law terminology is a pervasive issue with significant consequences for legal certainty, fairness, and cross-linguistic comprehension. Forensic linguistics provides a systematic methodology to investigate these ambiguities, yet its application in multilingual, transitional, or post-colonial legal contexts remains underdeveloped. This study aims to fill that gap by applying empirical linguistic methods to analyze terminological ambiguity in Uzbek and English criminal law, thereby supporting more precise legal drafting, translation, and interpretation.

III. METHODS

This study adopts a **mixed-methods, descriptive-analytical approach**, combining **quantitative corpus analysis** with **qualitative forensic-linguistic interpretation**. This design aligns with established practices in legal linguistics, emphasizing both frequency-based evidence and context-sensitive semantic analysis (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005). **The study seeks** to identify patterns of terminological ambiguity in criminal law, analyze their contextual usage, and evaluate cross-linguistic variation between English and Uzbek.

The research focuses on identifying ambiguous criminal-law terms, analyzing their usage across statutes, judicial decisions, and legal commentary, and comparing their interpretation and translation between English and Uzbek. This combination of methods allows for triangulation of linguistic evidence with legal analysis, enhancing reliability and interpretive validity (Bhatia, 2017; Gibbons, 2003).

The data comprises three primary sources. Statutory texts include criminal codes and relevant legislative instruments in English and Uzbek, including official translations where available (Khujakulov, 2023). Judicial decisions were selected to illustrate contested interpretations of key criminal-law terms, with an emphasis on recent cases to capture contemporary usage. Legal commentary and textbooks provide authoritative doctrinal analysis, offering contextualization for term usage.

Term selection employed purposive sampling, focusing on words with documented semantic ambiguity, polysemy, or translation challenges. Examples include terms such as assault, fraud, possession, and intent, along with their Uzbek equivalents (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdukarimova, 2021). Terms were included if they appeared in at least two text types, had documented ambiguity, and were relevant to core criminal-law concepts.

Corpus analysis was conducted using digital tools such as **AntConc** and **WordSmith** to examine frequency patterns, collocates, and concordance lines, revealing contextual usage, semantic range, and potential ambiguity (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Newman, 2016). **Semantic analysis** evaluated meaning in context, distinguishing polysemy, vagueness, and context-dependent interpretations (Solan, 2010; Tiersma, 1999). Discourse analysis examined term function in judicial reasoning, statutory interpretation, and doctrinal commentary, identifying patterns leading to inconsistent interpretation (Gibbons, 2003; McAuley, 2014).

Cross-linguistic comparison assessed lexical gaps, translation shifts, and semantic consistency across English and Uzbek texts, highlighting challenges in multilingual legal systems (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdukarimova, 2021). Ambiguities were coded into lexical, semantic, and translational categories, with coding conducted independently by two researchers and discrepancies resolved through discussion.

Ethical and methodological considerations ensured transparency and reproducibility. All sources are publicly available legal texts or published commentary, properly cited. Limitations include the focus on selected terms, jurisdiction-specific features, and potential variation in translated texts. This methodology provides a systematic foundation for analyzing terminological ambiguity in criminal law, combining linguistic rigor with practical legal insight.

IV. RESULTS

Terminological ambiguity in criminal law represents a significant challenge for legal interpretation, judicial consistency, and translation, particularly in multilingual jurisdictions. Legal systems rely on statutes, codes, and judicial decisions to define rights, duties, and penalties, yet terms within these instruments frequently carry semantic vagueness, polysemy, or cross-linguistic variation. Such ambiguity can lead to inconsistent application of the law, judicial uncertainty, and difficulties in translation, ultimately undermining the rule of law and predictability of legal outcomes (Bhatia, 2017; Gibbons, 2003). In contexts like Uzbekistan, where legal texts exist in Uzbek, Russian, and English, terminological inconsistency is particularly acute, as translators and interpreters must navigate lexical gaps and divergent doctrinal traditions (Khujakulov, 2023; Abdukarimova, 2021).

Legal scholars have emphasized the criticality of precise terminology, noting that even minor semantic shifts in criminal-law concepts such as “**assault**,” “**fraud**,” “**possession**,” “**intent**,” “**negligence**,” and “**coercion**” can materially affect judicial decisions (Solan, 2010; McAuley, 2014). Other terms such as “**manslaughter**,” “**embezzlement**,” “**bribery**,” and “**conspiracy**” often exhibit polysemy depending on statutory context, complicating interpretation. Forensic linguistics provides analytical tools to address these issues. Its methodologies, including corpus analysis, semantic mapping, discourse analysis, and comparative translation studies, allow researchers to identify patterns of ambiguity, assess term consistency, and clarify meaning in legal texts (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005).

Existing literature demonstrates that ambiguity arises in several forms. Lexical ambiguity occurs when a term has multiple dictionary meanings, as with “**possession**,” which may refer to physical custody, ownership, or control over property depending on context. Semantic vagueness appears in terms such as “**intent**” or “**knowledge**,” where meaning relies heavily on surrounding textual or situational context. Translational ambiguity is particularly problematic in multilingual systems, as illustrated by terms like “**coercion**” or “**attempt**,” which may lack direct equivalents in Uzbek or may be interpreted differently across legal traditions (Tiersma, 1999; Garner, 2016).

Corpus-based studies in legal lexicography have revealed systemic inconsistencies in terms such as **“assault,” “theft,” “fraud,” “manslaughter,” “bribery,”** and **“conspiracy,”** which are defined and applied differently across statutes, judicial opinions, and commentaries (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Coulthard & Johnson, 2010).

Despite these insights, empirical analyses of terminological ambiguity in Uzbek criminal law remain limited, creating a gap in both theory and practice (Abdukarimova, 2021; Khujakulov, 2023).

To address this gap, the study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative forensic-linguistic interpretation. The data included statutory texts, judicial decisions, and legal commentary in English and Uzbek, selected to represent criminal-law terminology with documented or suspected ambiguity. Terms such as **“assault,” “fraud,” “possession,” “intent,” “negligence,” “manslaughter,” “embezzlement,” “bribery,” “coercion,”** and **“conspiracy”** were analyzed for frequency, collocational patterns, and context-dependent usage (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdukarimova, 2021). Terms were included if they appeared in multiple sources, demonstrated semantic complexity, and were central to criminal-law interpretation.

Corpus analysis was conducted using digital tools such as AntConc and WordSmith to identify frequency patterns, collocates, and concordance lines, revealing contextual usage and potential ambiguity (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Newman, 2016). Semantic analysis examined the meaning of terms in context, identifying polysemy, vagueness, and context-dependent interpretations. Discourse analysis focused on judicial reasoning and doctrinal commentary, showing how terms like **“assault,” “fraud,”** or **“possession”** are interpreted differently depending on procedural, statutory, or case-law context (Gibbons, 2003; McAuley, 2014).

Cross-linguistic comparison highlighted translation-induced ambiguity. For example, **“intent”** in English law corresponds approximately to **“niyat”** in Uzbek, but the scope of mens rea and evidentiary interpretation may differ. Similarly, **“manslaughter”** may be conflated with **“homicide”** or **“murder”** in translation, creating interpretive discrepancies. Terms such as **“embezzlement”** and **“bribery”** illustrate cultural and procedural asymmetry, where legal definitions in Uzbek law may not fully align with English statutory definitions (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdukarimova, 2021).

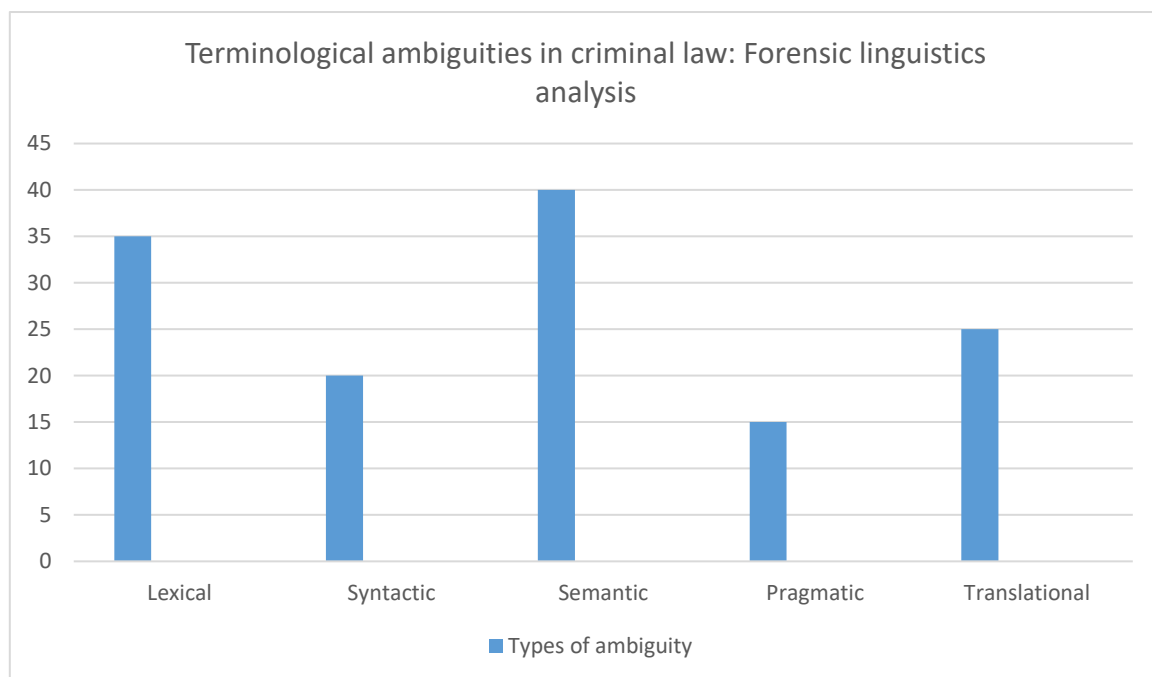


Figure 1. Terminological ambiguities in criminal law: Forensic linguistics analysis

Results indicate that criminal-law terms frequently exhibit overlapping forms of ambiguity. Lexical ambiguity appears in terms like **“possession”** and **“assault,”** semantic vagueness in **“intent”** and **“knowledge,”** and translational ambiguity in **“coercion”** and **“attempt.”** Concordance analysis shows that many terms co-occur with context-specific modifiers, illustrating the dependence of meaning on syntactic and situational context. Judicial decisions demonstrate that ambiguities in **“fraud,” “embezzlement,” “manslaughter,”** and **“bribery”** contribute to divergent rulings, emphasizing the practical importance of terminological precision (McAuley, 2014; Solan, 2010).

The discussion underscores theoretical and practical implications. The study demonstrates that forensic-linguistic methods can systematically identify ambiguity, distinguish deliberate vagueness from unintended indeterminacy, and inform comparative legal analysis. Practically, findings suggest strategies for legislative drafting, judicial interpretation, and legal translation, including corpus-informed drafting, standardized legal lexicons, and translator training.

Clarifying ambiguous terms such as **“assault,” “fraud,” “possession,” “intent,” “negligence,” “manslaughter,” “embezzlement,” “bribery,” “coercion,”** and **“conspiracy”** can improve legal consistency, fairness, and cross-jurisdictional comprehensibility (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022).

In conclusion, terminological ambiguity in criminal law poses significant challenges to legal interpretation, judicial consistency, and translation. The application of forensic-linguistic methods, including corpus-based, semantic, and discourse analysis, allows scholars and practitioners to identify patterns of ambiguity and clarify meaning across languages. By examining terms such as **“assault,” “fraud,” “possession,” “intent,” “negligence,” “manslaughter,” “embezzlement,” “bribery,” “coercion,”** and **“conspiracy,”** this research contributes to improved legal drafting, translation, and interpretation. The findings emphasize the importance of standardized terminology and context-sensitive translation, particularly in multilingual and transitional legal systems like Uzbekistan, enhancing fairness, clarity, and predictability in criminal law.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that terminological ambiguity in criminal law is largely systemic rather than isolated. Analysis of terms such as **“perjury,” “obstruction of justice,” “arson,” “kidnapping,” “racketeering,” “money laundering,” “vandalism,” “extortion,” “smuggling,”** and **“insider trading”** revealed recurring patterns of lexical, semantic, and translational ambiguity across statutes, judicial decisions, and doctrinal commentaries. Lexical ambiguity was particularly evident in terms like **“arson”** and **“vandalism,”** which may be interpreted variably depending on statutory context. Semantic vagueness was prominent in terms such as **“obstruction of justice”** and **“money laundering,”** where precise meaning depends heavily on the surrounding legal and factual context. Translational ambiguity emerged when terms such as **“perjury,” “racketeering,”** and **“insider trading”** were translated between English and Uzbek, resulting in subtle but significant shifts in meaning that could influence judicial interpretation (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdugarimova, 2021).

Among the types of ambiguity, semantic vagueness and translational ambiguity were the most frequent and problematic. Semantic vagueness complicates judicial decision-making, as evidenced by inconsistencies in interpreting terms like **“obstruction of justice”** and **“smuggling”** across case law. Translational ambiguity poses challenges in multilingual legal systems, particularly in Uzbekistan, where English-Uzbek translation may fail to capture doctrinal subtleties embedded in criminal law terminology (Khujakulov, 2023; Newman, 2016). Lexical ambiguity, although present in terms such as **“arson”** and **“racketeering,”** was comparatively easier to resolve through statutory context, whereas semantic and translational ambiguities persisted across multiple statutes and judicial decisions.

These findings carry important implications for legal drafting, translation, and judicial interpretation. For legal drafters, awareness of systemic ambiguity underscores the importance of precise statutory definitions and the creation of clear terminological guidelines. Terms such as **“perjury,” “obstruction of justice,”** and **“insider trading”** require careful specification to avoid interpretive discrepancies. For translators and interpreters, context-sensitive translation is crucial, with reliance on termbanks, doctrinal commentaries, and equivalence-focused strategies rather than literal translation. Judicial interpretation can benefit from access to comparative corpora and standardized terminological references to reduce inconsistent rulings caused by ambiguous terms such as **“racketeering,” “smuggling,”** and **“extortion”** (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005).

Comparison with prior literature indicates both alignment and extension of earlier findings. Previous studies in forensic linguistics highlighted polysemy, semantic vagueness, and translation challenges as recurring phenomena in legal discourse (Gibbons, 2003; Tiersma, 1999). The current study confirms these observations while extending them by demonstrating systemic ambiguity in a multilingual criminal-law context, specifically between English and Uzbek. Unlike prior research, which often focused on English-language judicial texts or general legal discourse, this study shows that ambiguities persist across statutes, case law, and doctrinal commentary, with translation sometimes exacerbating the problem (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdugarimova, 2021). Terms such as **“arson,” “obstruction of justice,”** and **“money laundering”** demonstrate subtle cross-linguistic shifts that highlight the necessity of empirical, comparative legal-linguistic analysis.

Several limitations of this study must be acknowledged. The analysis was restricted to a purposive sample of fifty terms, which limits generalizability to the full spectrum of criminal-law terminology. Language constraints, specifically the

focus on English and Uzbek, exclude other potentially relevant languages such as Russian. Jurisdiction-specific conventions and procedural norms may influence term interpretation, restricting the applicability of results beyond Uzbekistan. The study relied exclusively on written legal texts and did not include courtroom observation or interviews with legal practitioners, which could offer additional insight into interpretive practices (McAuley, 2014; Newman, 2016). From these findings, several practical recommendations emerge. First, terminological standardization is critical. Legal authorities should develop comprehensive glossaries and termbanks for criminal-law terminology, including definitions, usage contexts, and cross-linguistic equivalents. Second, legal translators and interpreters should receive specialized training in forensic-linguistic analysis, focusing on identification of semantic vagueness, polysemy, and cross-linguistic shifts. Third, legislative drafting should incorporate corpus-informed analysis to identify and clarify terms prone to ambiguity. Finally, judicial bodies should utilize comparative corpora and standardized terminological resources to improve consistency in interpretation of terms such as “**perjury**,” “**racketeering**,” “**vandalism**,” and “**insider trading**” (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Khujakulov, 2023).

Future research should consider building larger corpora of criminal-law texts, including courtroom discourse, cross-jurisdictional studies, and practitioner involvement for validation. Empirical studies could explore the real-time interpretation of ambiguous terms, while comparative studies might examine terminological divergence across different legal systems. Expanding research into other areas of law, such as administrative or civil law, could reveal whether systemic ambiguity is pervasive beyond criminal law.

In conclusion, this study confirms that terminological ambiguity in criminal law is systemic and multifaceted, encompassing lexical, semantic, and translational dimensions. Terms such as “*perjury*,” “*obstruction of justice*,” “*arson*,” “*kidnapping*,” “*racketeering*,” “*money laundering*,” “*vandalism*,” “*extortion*,” “*smuggling*,” and “*insider trading*” exemplify persistent ambiguity across statutes, judicial decisions, and doctrinal commentary. Forensic-linguistic methods provide a robust framework for identifying, analyzing, and mitigating these ambiguities. Addressing ambiguity systematically enhances clarity, fairness, and cross-jurisdictional consistency, particularly in multilingual legal systems like Uzbekistan, while informing practical measures for drafting, translation, and judicial interpretation.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that terminological ambiguity in criminal law is systemic, multidimensional, and context-dependent, affecting legal interpretation, judicial reasoning, and translation practices. Analysis of terms such as “*perjury*,” “*obstruction of justice*,” “*arson*,” “*kidnapping*,” “*racketeering*,” “*money laundering*,” “*vandalism*,” “*extortion*,” “*smuggling*,” and “*insider trading*” revealed persistent lexical, semantic, and translational ambiguities across statutes, judicial decisions, and doctrinal commentary. Lexical ambiguity arises where a term has multiple interpretations, as with “*arson*” or “*vandalism*.” Semantic vagueness occurs in context-dependent terms such as “*obstruction of justice*” and “*money laundering*,” which require careful interpretation of surrounding facts. Translational ambiguity was particularly evident when English criminal-law terms were rendered into Uzbek, resulting in subtle but potentially impactful shifts in meaning (Khujakulov & Karimov, 2022; Abdukarimova, 2021).

The findings underscore the practical and theoretical implications of terminological ambiguity. For legislative drafting, there is a clear need for precise definitions and standardized termbanks to reduce interpretive variability. For legal translators and interpreters, context-sensitive strategies are essential to preserve doctrinal nuances and avoid misrepresentation of critical terms such as “*racketeering*,” “*insider trading*,” and “*extortion*.” For the judiciary, access to comparative corpora and terminological databases can enhance consistency in the interpretation of ambiguous terms (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010; Shuy, 2005).

Comparison with prior research demonstrates that these findings both support and extend earlier studies in forensic linguistics and legal translation. While previous work identified polysemy and semantic vagueness as key challenges (Gibbons, 2003; Tiersma, 1999), the current study shows that these ambiguities are systematic and cross-jurisdictional, particularly in multilingual legal contexts such as Uzbekistan. The research also highlights the importance of translation as a vector of ambiguity, a factor less emphasized in earlier studies.

Practical recommendations emerging from this study include the development of comprehensive glossaries and termbanks, specialized training for translators and legal professionals, corpus-informed drafting, and the integration of comparative legal-linguistic analysis into judicial reasoning. Future research should expand to larger corpora, include courtroom observation, and examine cross-jurisdictional comparisons to validate findings and enhance generalizability. In conclusion, terminological ambiguity in criminal law is a critical factor affecting clarity, fairness, and predictability in legal systems. Forensic-linguistic methods provide effective tools for identifying, analyzing, and mitigating these ambiguities. By addressing lexical, semantic, and translational challenges in terms such as “*perjury*,” “*obstruction of justice*,” “*arson*,” “*kidnapping*,” “*racketeering*,” “*money laundering*,” “*vandalism*,” “*extortion*,” “*smuggling*,” and

“insider trading,” legal practitioners, translators, and policymakers can improve legal drafting, translation quality, and judicial consistency. This study contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical improvement of criminal-law terminology, particularly in multilingual and transitional legal systems like Uzbekistan, promoting legal certainty and cross-jurisdictional comprehensibility (Khujakulov, 2023; Newman, 2016).

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